

City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services

2015 Girls Fastpitch Softball Rules

I. Team Roster

- A. All participants **must** be properly registered through Kent Parks.
1. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: Rosters are limited to no more than 15 players.
 2. Middle School & Senior High: Rosters are limited to no more than 14 players
- B. All participants must play in the grade that they are in for the 2014-2015 school year and cannot play up or down a grade level. Any misrepresentation of grade or age will result in immediate withdrawal from the program and will require permission from Kent Parks to continue participation in any future programs.
- C. No player additions after **May 16, 2015**.

II. General Information

- A. **Umpires:** Kent Parks will provide umpires for all games.
- B. **Players:**
1. a) 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: A team shall consist of ten (10) players: a pitcher, a catcher, four (4) infielders, and four (4) outfielders. Outfielders must play in a fan and be at least ten (10) yards behind the baseline.
 - b) Middle School & Senior High: A team shall consist of nine (9) players: a pitcher, a catcher, four (4) infielders, and three (3) outfielders.
2. A team must start and/or finish the game with a minimum of seven (7) players. Failure results in a forfeit.
3. All players are expected to wear City of Kent Parks and Recreation t-shirts while participating.
- C. **Jewelry Policy:** Participants **are not** allowed to wear **any** jewelry (necklaces, earrings, stud earrings, bracelets, etc.) while playing. Those participants that have medical ID bracelets may wear a wristband over the bracelet. Hair control devices may be worn if made of soft material and not for adornment.
- D. **Field:**
1. All games will be played on fields designated by Kent Parks as per game schedules.
 2. **Pitching/Base Distances:**
 - a) 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: The base distance is 60 ft. Pitching distance is **35 ft.**
 - b) 5th/6th Grade: The base distance is 60 ft. Pitching distance is **40 ft.**
 - c) Middle School / Senior High: The base distance is 60 ft. Pitching distance is **43 ft.**
- E. **Equipment:** Contact League Director for replacement of defective or damaged equipment.
1. **Game Balls:**
 - a) 3rd/4th & Grade: The home team will supply 11-inch game ball.
 - b) 5th – 12th Grade: The home team will supply 12-inch game ball.
 2. **Bats:**
 - a) 3rd/4th Grade: Girls may use regulation softball or T-ball bats.
 - b) 5th – 12th Grade: Bats must be regulation softball bats.
 3. **Shoes:** Rubber cleats, multi-purpose shoes, or tennis shoes only. *Metal cleats are prohibited.*

II. General Information (continued)

4. **Catcher's Equipment:** Catchers are required to wear a catcher's facemask with helmet, chest protector and shin guards. It is highly recommended that catchers wear a protective cup.
5. **Batters Helmets:** All batters, base runners and on-deck batters are required to wear protective batters helmets. Helmets must be NOCSAE approved and have a face mask and chin strap.

III. Game Information

A. Game Times: Teams are expected to be ready to play at game time. *No grace period.*

Elementary		Middle School / Senior High	
<u>Start Time</u>	<u>No New Inning After</u>	<u>Start Time</u>	<u>No New Inning After</u>
5:30 p.m.	6:55 p.m.	6:00 p.m.	7:25 p.m.
7:15 p.m.	8:40 p.m.	7:45 p.m.	9:10 p.m.

B. Game Length:

1. All innings that start after the first hour and ten minutes are unlimited runs. No inning is to start with five (5) minutes left in the game. Game length is one hour and thirty minutes and the final inning of the game is to be completed. To get as much playing time as possible, please have your team hustle on and off the field.
2. If the visiting team is at bat and it becomes obvious that there will not be enough time to start another inning, the umpire can declare in the middle of the inning that the inning will be unlimited runs.

C. Reschedule Game Policy: Games will not be rescheduled unless postponed by Kent Parks due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.

D. No Infield Practice: Due to time restraints teams are not allowed to take infield practice before their game.

E. Regulation Game:

1. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: Regulation Game consists of six (6) innings.
2. Middle School & Senior High: Regulation Game consists of seven (7) innings.

F. Official Game:

1. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: If a game is called before time expires, it is an official game if three (3) complete innings have been played or if the home team is ahead after the visiting team has had their turn at bat in the third inning. Kent Parks will reschedule any postponed/cancelled games.
2. Middle School & Senior High: If a game is called before time expires, it is an official game if four (4) complete innings have been played or if the home team is ahead after the visiting team has had their turn at bat in the third inning. Kent Parks will reschedule any postponed/cancelled games.
3. If a game is tied at the end of regulation, it shall end as a tie and be an official game.
4. If a game goes the time limit, it is an official game regardless of the amount of innings played.

G. Rainout Information:

1. All games will be played as scheduled unless postponed due to inclement weather. No decision will be made on cancellation of games until 4:00 p.m. on game day. Information can be attained at 253-856-5020. Kent Parks will reschedule any postponed games.
2. During inclement weather, i.e. rain, electrical storms, etc., the Umpire's judgment will be used for determining the continuation of the game.

H. Dugout Information: Home team takes the third base dugout; visitors take the first base dugout. Players must stay out of play except for the batter, base runners and the on-deck batter.

III. Game Information (continued)

- I. Scorekeeping:** The home team is responsible for keeping the official scorebook/sheet. The visiting team is responsible for verifying the score between half innings. If for some reason the home team can not supply an official scorekeeper, the visiting team will become the official scorekeeper. Please make sure the scoresheet is filled out properly (i.e. team name, date, player's first and last name, jersey number, etc.)
- J. Participation Guidelines:** All players must participate on defense at least two (2) innings. It is recommended that players play in both the infield and outfield during the game. All players are placed in the batting line-up.
- K. Injury:** An injured player missing her turn at bat shall be removed from line up and cannot re-enter the game. A player removed from the lineup does not count as an "out" when their turn at bat arrives. An injured batter/baserunner will be replaced on base by whoever made the last out and can continue to participate as long as they do not miss their turn at bat. Any clothing with blood on it must be changed. ***Seeing to an injured player is more important than the result of the game and shall take precedence.***
- L. Substitutions:** Unlimited substitutions of all defensive positions, including the pitching position.
- M. Conferences:** Defined as a meeting that involves the coach and team players, not relating to injury.
 - 1. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: Teams are allowed two conferences per game without penalty. For any following conferences, the pitcher will be removed and can only re-enter as the pitcher in subsequent innings.
 - 2. Middle School & Senior High: Teams are allowed three conferences per game without penalty. For any following conferences, the pitcher will be removed and can only re-enter as the pitcher in subsequent innings.
- N. Runs Per Inning Limit:** When a team scores five (5) runs during their turn at-bat, the inning is over. Any subsequent runs scored on the at-bat that brings in the fifth run will also count. *Example: Three runs have been scored in the inning, bases are loaded, batter hits a triple and three runs score. All three runs count for a total of six (6) runs in the inning.*
- O. Ten Run Rule:** A ten (10) run rule is in effect for all games.
 - 1. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade:
 - a) If the home team is ahead by ten (10) runs after 2 ½ innings, the game shall be called.
 - b) If the visitor is ahead by ten (10) runs after three (3) complete innings, the game shall be called.
 - 2. Middle School & Senior High:
 - a) If the home team is ahead by ten (10) runs after 4 ½ innings, the game shall be called.
 - b) If the visitor is ahead by ten (10) runs after five (5) complete innings, the game shall be called.
 - 3. All Leagues: Although the game is officially over when the ten (10) run rule occurs, play may continue until the time limit expires. No score is kept during this time and the game official is not required to continue.
- P. Score Line:** Winning team is responsible to call in the score after the game and the Home team is responsible for calling in tie games at (253) 856-5027.
- Q. Points:** Points are awarded as follows: Win - 3 points Tie - 1 point Loss - 0 points
- R.** No protests are allowed. Problems/conflicts must be resolved by umpires/coaches before the next legal pitch.
- S.** All other National Federation of High School Association Softball Rules will prevail unless stated in Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services softball rules. Coaches are not allowed to change or modify any rules or guidelines, even if they are agreed upon by both coaches before the game.

IV. Pitching

A. All Leagues:

1. The pitcher is allowed four (4) warm-up pitches.
2. The pitcher must start with one or both feet on the pitching rubber and can not take a step backwards. The pitcher can start with one foot behind the rubber, but whichever style they choose, must step forward towards home plate. Leaning/rocking on the back foot is acceptable as long as a step is not taken.
3. The pitcher may use the "sling shot" or the "full windmill" delivery in pitching the ball.
4. The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate, which is between the batter's forward armpit and the top of her knees when the batter assumes her natural batting stance.
5. Although there is not a regulation for pitchers on the amount of batters hit by pitch during a game or inning, coaches are asked to use their best judgment in continuing with a pitcher when their control is lacking and/or batters wellbeing could be at risk.

B. 3rd/4th Grade:

1. The opposing team pitches to the batter. A batter may strike out or hit in to fair territory, but can not draw a walk. If the batter accumulates four (4) balls, the coach of the batting team will pitch from the pitching rubber and assumes the batter's strike count. The coach will continue to pitch the remainder of the strikes. *Example: The batter has 1 strike, the coach will pitch up to two (2) pitches.* Any pitch (es) made by the coach, are considered a strike, however if the last pitch is fouled off by the batter, they continue their at bat. At the end of the coach's pitches the batter will either be out on strikes or have hit the ball in to fair territory.
2. When the coach is pitching, the opposing pitcher assumes a defensive position behind the rubber within the circle area (8-foot radius around the pitching rubber).
3. In an effort to keep the game fun and encourage the batter to hit off of the opposing teams pitcher, the Umpires will have a "liberal" view of the strike zone.
4. The pitcher must throw the ball to 1st base with the exception of a ball fielded on the 1st base line. The pitcher cannot run down a base runner running to 1st base. If the pitcher does run down a batter running to first, the base runner will be called "safe". A pitcher may cover 1st base on a hit to another fielder.
5. When the batters coach assumes the pitching position, check that the fielders are ready for the pitch.

V. Fielding

A. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: Outfields shall play 10 yards from the baseline. For games on field's with dirt infields and grass outfields, outfielders must be in the grass portion of the outfield.

B. **Catcher Interference:** If the catcher obstructs, hinders or prevents the batter from hitting a pitched ball, it will be a dead ball unless the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely and if all other runners have advanced at least one base on the play, then catcher obstruction is canceled. Otherwise, the coach of the batting team has the option to take the result of the play or have the obstruction enforced by awarding the batter first base and advancing all other runners only if forced.

C. **Infield Fly Rule:**

1. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade: The infield fly rule is **not** in effect.
2. Middle School & Senior High: The infield fly rule **is** in effect.

VI. Batting

A. All Leagues:

1. **Batting Line-Up:** All girls present at game time will be placed in the batting line-up. Players arriving late will be added to the end of the batting line-up. If a player leaves the game before its conclusion, their spot in the batting order is skipped and is not an "automatic out".
2. Designated hitters are not allowed, everybody bats.
3. A courtesy runner (player making the last out) may be used for the catcher once she is on base safely.
4. Batters are allowed unlimited foul balls on a full swing, unless it leads to a legal out. The batter is out if a foul tip (batted ball not higher than the batters head) on the third strike is caught by the catcher. The batter is out when she bunts foul after the second strike.
5. **Thrown Bat:** All players receive a warning on their first offense, their second offense is a dead ball out.
6. **Batting Out of Order:**
 - a) A player batting out of turn shall be called out if, after successfully reaching base and before the next pitch, it is brought to the Umpire's attention. All base runners return to the base occupied before the infraction.
 - b) If it is brought to the attention of the Umpire after a pitch has been made to the batter, the improper batter becomes the proper batter and her at bat becomes legal. The batting order shall continue with the next batter after the improper batter. If a change of batters has to be made, the legal batter assumes the ball/strike count of the other batter.
 - c) When several players bat out of order before discovery, and a player's time at bat occurs while she is a base runner, such player remains on base, she is not out as a batter and her at bat will be skipped.
7. **Hit by Pitch:** A batter is awarded first base if a pitched ball not swung at nor called a strike touches a batter or their clothing. It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground before hitting the batter. The batter's hands are not considered a part of the bat. The batter must make an attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch.

B. 3rd/4th Grade:

1. The dropped third strike rule is **not** in effect.
2. Bunting is only allowed when the opposing team is pitching. Bunting is not allowed when the coach is pitching.
3. A batter hit by a pitch from the opposing team's pitcher is awarded first base. A batter is not awarded first base if hit by a pitch by the coach.

C. 5th/6th Grade: The dropped third strike rule is **not** in effect.

D. Middle School & Senior High: The dropped third strike rule **is** in effect.

(Dropped Third Strike Rule: When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are 1) Fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch or 2) any time there are two outs.)

VII. Base Running

A. Double First Base Rule:

1. Runner should use colored base on initial play at first base, unless the fielder is drawn to the side of the colored base, in which case the runner would go to the white base and fielder to the colored.
2. Runner is never out for touching white base rather than the colored base.
3. Once the runner reaches first base, the runner must then use the white base.

B. Base Stealing:

1. 3rd/4th Grade:
 - a) Runners can not leave their base until the pitched ball has been hit, reaches or passes home plate.
 - b) If a base runner is off the base when the pitcher delivers the ball, the base runner will be called "out". This is a dead ball situation.
 - c) A base runner may steal one (1) base per pitch when the opposing team is pitching. Runners can not advance on an overthrow during an attempt. There is no base stealing when the coach is pitching.
 - d) A base runner can not steal home. Runners may only score on a hit ball.
2. 5th/6th Grade:
 - a) Runners cannot leave their base until the pitched ball has been hit, reaches or passes home plate. Once the ball has been hit, reaches or passes home plate, base runners may advance at their own risk.
 - b) If a base runner is off the base when the pitcher delivers the ball, the base runner will be called "out". This is a dead ball situation.
3. Middle School & Senior High: National Federation of High School Association Softball Rules apply.

C. Sliding Rule:

1. Sliding is allowed, although a headfirst slide is prohibited, unless diving back to base.
2. **Sliding/Collisions**: On a close play at any base, the runner must slide or make an attempt to avoid a collision. Failure to do so will be an "OUT". This is a judgment call made by the Umpire.
3. Fielders are not allowed to block any base without the ball.

VIII. Coach/Player/Spectator Conduct

- A. Coaches and assistant coaches are responsible for the actions of their players and spectators. Unsportsmanlike conduct by a player(s) or spectator(s) will result in immediate removal from the site or the team will automatically forfeit the game. Person(s) will face possible suspension from further games as well as possible expulsion from the league and future Kent Parks programs. Person(s) must have League Coordinator's permission to be reinstated.
- B. Any person(s) who is confrontational, threatens and/or is verbally/physically abusive, in any way towards an umpire, player, coach, parent, spectator or city employee before, during or after the game may be suspended for a minimum of two (2) games and as much as expulsion from the league and future Kent Parks programs. Person must have League Coordinator's permission to be reinstated.
- C. A player/coach/spectator who is ejected will be suspended a minimum of one (1) game. League Coordinators will decide on length of suspension.

VIII. Coach/Player/Spectator Conduct (continued)

- D.** Only the head coach can talk with the umpires before and during the game. Coaches, players, parents or spectators **are not** allowed to discuss, review or talk with the game umpires once the game is over. This may result in a minimum one (1) game suspension. After the game, congratulate the kids for playing a great game and enjoy the post game snack.
- E.** Players/coaches/spectators ejected from the game will leave the field/facility immediately or automatically forfeit the game and face possible expulsion from the league.
- F.** Any person(s) that is on suspension cannot accompany the team to any scheduled games during the length of their suspension. If they do they face possible expulsion from the league and future Kent Parks programs. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that any assistant coach(s), parents or spectators that are suspended not attend the game(s) during their suspension.
- G.** Any participant that is suspended from school is ineligible to partake in practices or games until their suspension has been completed.
- H.** Players/spectators/coaches are not to cheer against the opposing team. Everybody is encouraged to cheer for the kids, regardless of which team they are on, so that their playing experience is a joyous one. **Good sportsmanship is contagious.**
- I. Casual Profanity:** Casual profanity pertains to expletives and verbal unsportsmanlike language not necessarily directed at Umpires or opposing players, but is uttered by a player out of frustration. This type of behavior is penalized by "outs" against the offending team.
 - 1. If the team is at bat and unsportsmanlike words are used, the next batter will be declared "out".
 - 2. If the act is committed by a player remaining at bat, that player will be called "out".
 - 3. If the act is committed by the defensive team, the first person to bat in the next inning will be declared "out".
 - 4. If the violation occurs in the bottom of the last inning, where the fielding team may not bat again, the ejection rule will be applied. If a team has an eligible substitute, they can continue the game.
 - 5. A game may be ended by a casual profanity out.
- J.** The City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Program Coordinators have the authority to make rulings on any and all dealings regarding this league. All decisions are final.
- K. Tobacco Policy:** Nobody may use tobacco (smoke, chew, etc.) on City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services or Kent School District playing facilities while practice/games are in session. This applies to **everyone:** spectators, coaches and participants.

Jay Hill, Girl's Softball Coordinator
Kyle Nearhood, Umpire Supervisor Leagues
Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services

Telephone: 253-856-5000
Rainout Line: 253-856-5020
Score Line: 253-856-5027

League Information: www.KentWa.gov/SportsLeagues
Facebook: www.facebook.com/KentSportsLeagues
